

REMARKS

Claims 1-19 and 27-29 are currently pending in this application. Claims 1, 3-7, 9, 12, 14, 15, and 17-19 have been amended. Non-elected claims 20-26 have been canceled. Claims 8, 10, and 11 have also been canceled. Claims 27-29 have been added. No new matter has been introduced.

Claims 1-19 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Claims 1, 17, and 18 have been amended to remove the narrower ranges. The narrower ranges are now claimed in dependent claims 27, 28, and 29 respectively. Further, the term “preferably” in claims 1, 14, 15, 17, and 18 has been deleted to obviate the rejection. Amended claims 1 and 3-6 no longer contain the term “Si derivatives.” Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request the withdrawal of the § 112 rejection.

Claims 1-6, 11-17, and 19 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Armanini et al., SiO₂ Entrapment of animal Cells. Part 2: Protein diffusion through collagen membranes coated with sol-gel SiO₂ (“Armanini”). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Applicants submit that Armanini fails to disclose all limitations of amended claim 1. Armanini discloses a process for coating a collagen surface with a layer of alkoxides using a binary mixture of Si(OEt)₄ and HSiCH₃(OEt)₂ in 80:20 molar ratio. Armanini at 3058. However, Armanini fails to disclose a “process for producing a siliceous layer capable of...selectively cutting off macromolecules having a molecular weight higher than a selected threshold, comprising the steps of a) supplying a gas flow of a gas carrier saturated by a mixture of (1) Si(OR)₄, (2) R'Si(OR)₃ and (3) R'SiH(OR)₂ ...in a ratio of either (1) 65-79%, (2) 1-10%, (3) 20-25% v/v or (1) 53-70%, (2) 10-22%, (3)

15-25% v/v," as recited in amended claim 1. For at least this reason, amended claim 1 is submitted to be novel over Armanini.

Claims 2-6, 11-17, and 19 depend from amended claim 1 and are submitted to be allowable along with amended claim 1. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request the withdrawal of the § 102 rejection.

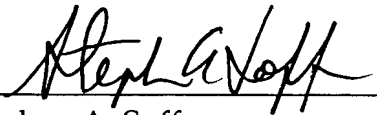
Claims 1-6, 11-17, and 19 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Armanini. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

The Examiner states that the "reference teaches the control of immobilized substrates with gaseous silicon alkoxides which includes the specific silicon oxides [sic] as noted on page 3058, column lines 2-3." Office Action at 5. However, the silicon alkoxides referenced on page 3058 of Armanini is a binary mixture of $\text{Si}(\text{OEt})_4$ and $\text{HSiCH}_3(\text{OEt})_2$ in 80:20 molar ratio. Armanini at 3058. Armanini contains no teaching or suggestion to modify the binary mixture of $\text{Si}(\text{OEt})_4$ and $\text{HSiCH}_3(\text{OEt})_2$ to obtain the ternary "mixture of (1) $\text{Si}(\text{OR})_4$, (2) $\text{R}'\text{Si}(\text{OR})_3$ and (3) $\text{R}'\text{SiH}(\text{OR})_2$...in a ratio of either (1) 65-79%, (2) 1-10%, (3) 20-25% v/v or (1) 53-70%, (2) 10-22%, (3) 15-25% v/v," as recited in amended claim 1. As such, Applicants respectfully submit that independent claim 1, and dependent claims 2-6, 11-17 and 19 are distinguishable over Armanini, and request withdrawal of the § 103 rejection.

In view of the above amendments, Applicants submit that the present application is in condition for allowance, and such action is earnestly solicited.

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Respectfully submitted,

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